Claude Giroux is suspended for Game 5 – an elimination game. Not surprised, in fact that's what I said he'd get. Flyers fans hate Shanahan, but let's face it the hit was late. And if you have a rule - "you can't use the 'well Player X got away with it last week, so Player Y has to get away with it too' excuse" – then you know it was the right call.

But as with many 'superstar out of the lineup' situations, I think the Flyers win without him. Just like the Devils without Kovalchuk and the Preds without Radulov (the first time).

Hey, what did I tell ya? What have I been saying? Check out this headline "Even at 40, all Martin Brodeur does is win playoff games". The Devils are winning the games, Brodeur is stealing zero of them. But as I keep saying – the legends get free accolades long after they stop being deserved. And as the 22-save wins pile up, the headlines will write themselves.

Vancouver GM Mike Gillis has signed a contract extension, but was tight-lipped about the length. As if he'll go through that entire contract and the media and public will never find out when it is to end. The games people play…

The NHL has reached a “preliminary agreement” to sell the Coyotes to a group headed by Greg Jamison. Details of the sale are here , and if the Coyotes were eliminated first round we wouldn’t be hearing about this now.

Toronto prospect Leo Komarov is talking about coming to North America next season. The Finnish forward had 24 points and 58 PIM in 46 KHL games. Not very impressive, but the leading scorer on his team only had 29. He’s a possible third liner with potential 30-point, 90+ PIM numbers.

If this story turns out correct and Joel Quenneville does become coach of the Habs, look for Carey Price
to be worth his weight in gold. Again.

Take a look over at DobberProspects – Brendan Ross has some great musings on the Leafs, as well as other prospect talk. He and Rich Dillon have gone above and beyond with keeping the ramblings fresh over there.

The Caps were held to just 18 shots on Lundqvist. I know I'm hard on Brodeur for facing just a few shots and getting free wins… but Lundqvist is having a fairly easy time as well. If you count the triple OT game as two games, then he's averaging about 22 shots faced per game this series.

Marc Staal has three points in two games and five in the postseason. He had five in 46 regular season games. He's found his stride.

Chris Kreider is down to about seven minutes per game now. He's a minus-4 in the last four games, with zero points. The adrenalin rush is over…

Alex Semin hasn't scored in seven games now. That's 17 shots. He has just four points in 12 playoff games as he works his way towards a lucrative KHL contract.

So now we all go back to Barry Trotz's decision to sit Alexander Radulov an extra game. Most of us thought it was a dumb move even before we knew the outcome. But an even dumber move, and perhaps a Nashville die-hard can help me out here, but why did I never see Sergei Kostitsyn
, a setup man, on a line with Rads, a scorer?

Mike Smith has stopped 379 of 400 shots in these playoffs.

Here's an interesting scenario in my keeper league playoff pool. The Top 9 regular season teams compete in the playoffs. My team and another team are loaded with the most playoff players. His team was better than mine, slightly. My team was built around Penguins, Bruins, Sharks and Predators, but I had other players scattered about. His team – Penguins, Flyers, Preds and others. I have Mike Smith . The end result after this round could see the two of us pretty much tied, but with just a couple of players each remaining. It would be, if the Flyers get eliminated, my Mike Smith , Vermette, Del Zotto and Stoll vs. his Anisimov, Stepan, Dubinsky. I'll take it. BUT, because of all the weirdness in these playoffs, three other teams in the pool can get back in it despite being about 20% behind me. Can Brown and Williams make up the 16-point gap that Team C is behind? Can Lundqvist, Whitney and Elias make up for the 25-point gap that Team D is behind? Can Quick, Kovalchuk, Doughty and Vrbata close the 33-point gap (Team E)? See, the top two teams have hardly any players but such a nice lead that it will make it interesting. But I've never won the playoff trophy in this particular pool – and that trophy's name is the Dobber Cup. So I kinda want it.

Andrei Kostitsyn didn't do enough to get re-signed. On the open market, man, this could go anywhere. From the KHL, to a training camp invite, to a low-dollar deal, to something stupid like a Ville Leino offer of millions per season. No idea. Depends on how drunk some GM's get. But the market for offensive players with the potential to score 30 (whether they reach that potential or not, just sayin) is slim. And GM's tend to overpay when the market is slim.

No, I don't think Radulov will be back next year. I do think he'll be back the year after, as an unrestricted free agent.

Shea Weber had three points in 10 playoff games.

Boom! Girardi hammers Mike Green :

{youtube}1lISBLTm8Qk{/youtube}

Kovalchuk uses his helmet to try to keep the puck in the zone:

{youtube}7WVptUkEjSo{/youtube}